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Letter dated 24 August 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing under the instructions of my Government to bring the following to your kind attention.

As the tragic consequences of the Syrian conflict in its sixth year continue unabated, not just the Syrian people but the entire region suffer tremendously. The terrorist organizations that have found fertile ground are conducting activities which constitute a clear threat to regional stability and the national security of Turkey.

In a letter to the Security Council dated 24 July 2015, we had informed the members of the Council of our intention to combat DEASH terrorists and the actions we initiated thereon.

Since that date, Syria-based terrorism and its spillover effects have also grown exponentially. DEASH terrorists launched rocket attacks and artillery fire in the border area that resulted in the deaths of 21 people in Turkey. DEASH has also carried out terrorist attacks in our cities that have claimed the lives of hundreds. Most recently, 54 of our citizens, many of whom were women and children, fell victim to yet another bombed attack in Gaziantep on 20 August.

In facing this terrorist threat, our response has always been proportionate, measured and responsible in line with the right of self-defence as outlined in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Turkey initiated a military operation in the early hours of 24 August 2016 against DEASH, which has been directly and deliberately targeting Turkey, as part of its national efforts and in collaboration with international actions. This military action, supported by the International Coalition elements, is being undertaken in areas under DEASH control in northern Syria.

This measure was essential in terms of ensuring Turkey's border security and our national security based on the notion of self-defence as outlined in Article 51, but also within the context of the responsibility attributed to member countries in the fight against terrorism through Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001), 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014).

I would like to underline that Turkey, unequivocally committed to the territorial integrity and political unity of Syria, undertakes this measure with a view to contributing to and furthering these basic principles.

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Turkey remains staunchly committed to finding a political solution to the conflict in Syria through a genuine political transition, as outlined in the Geneva communiqué and Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), and will continue its dauntless efforts to make this a reality as soon as possible.

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Y. Halit **Çevik**
Permanent Representative